

URGENT BUSINESS

Response to Technical Consultation: Increasing Planning Fees and Performance

Report of the Senior Manager - Democratic Services

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To seek approval from the CE in consultation with the Chair of Council Business Committee for the submission of a response to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities consultation "*Stronger performance of local planning authorities supported through an increase in planning fees*".

This report is public

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) That the draft response to the *Stronger performance of local planning authorities supported through an increase in planning fees* consultation be approved and submitted in advance of the deadline of 25 April 2023.

1.0 Introduction

1.1 On 28 February 2023 the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) published a national consultation which sought views on proposals to increase nationally set planning application fees. The consultation also discussed potential proposals to improve the performance of local planning authorities.

1.2 The headline proposals included:

- An increase of national planning fees by 35% for major applications, and 25% for all other applications,
- The potential to introduce additional fees for bespoke or 'fast track' services,
- An annual inflation-related adjustment to planning fees,
- Proposals to ring-fence the additional planning application fee income to be spent on planning services only,
- The introduction of double fees for retrospective planning applications,
- The removal of the 'free go' for repeat applications,
- The introduction of a prior approval fee for the permitted development right allowing the Crown to develop sites within the perimeter of a closed defence site,
- Proposals to build planning capacity and capability within local authorities, including addressing challenges in recruitment and retention,
- Reducing the national 'Planning Guarantee' from 26 weeks to 16 weeks for non-major applications; and,

- To improve the quality of the local authority planning service by monitoring more performance measures.

1.3 The consultation provides further detail regarding the above proposals and is structured around a series of consultation questions.

2.0 Proposal Details

2.1 Officers have drafted responses to this consultation (attached) for consideration by the Chief Executive.

2.2 The next meeting of the Committee is on 15 June 2023, which is past the deadline for submission of responses, so the request must be dealt with as urgent business between meetings with the decision being taken by the Chief Executive in consultation with the Chair of the relevant committee for signing off on Consultation responses (Council Business Committee).

3.0 Details of Consultation

3.1 Given that the proposals in the consultation have a direct impact upon Development Management matters, the draft response has been shared with the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Planning Regulatory Committee in advance of submission to the Council Business Committee.

3.2 In line with Part 2, Section 7, of the Constitution, Matters of Urgency – there has been consultation with Councillor Geoff Knight, Chair of Council Business Committee.

4.0 Conclusion

4.1 The Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chair of Council Business Committee, is asked to approve and submit the draft consultation response.

<p>CONCLUSION OF IMPACT ASSESSMENT (including Diversity, Human Rights, Community Safety, Sustainability and Rural Proofing)</p>

None

<p>FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

None

<p>SECTION 151 OFFICER'S COMMENTS</p>

The Section 151 Officer has no comments.

<p>LEGAL IMPLICATIONS</p>

None

MONITORING OFFICER'S COMMENTS

The Deputy Monitoring Officer has been involved in the drafting of this report and has no comments to add.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

[DLUHC Open consultation web page](#)

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